

ONS00478
10/729,292Remarks

Claims 1-8, 10-11, 17, 18, and 21-26 are in the application. The allowance of claims 1-8, 10-11, 17 and 18 is acknowledged.

By this amendment, claims 21, 22, 25 and 26 have been amended to more particularly point out and claim the subject matter of applicants' invention. FIGS. 3, 4 and 7 as well as the associated specification support the changes to these claims.

Claims 21-24 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) in view of Watannabe et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the amendments made herein and the remarks presented hereinafter.

Claim 21 calls for a lateral FET device including a semiconductor substrate having a first conductivity type. A plurality of drain regions of a second conductivity type is formed in the semiconductor substrate, and each drain region comprises a well region and a drain contact region. A plurality of source regions of the second conductivity type is formed in the semiconductor substrate. A first conductive layer is formed over the semiconductor substrate, wherein the first conductive layer couples at least two source regions together. A second conductive layer is formed over the semiconductor substrate, wherein the second conductive layer couples at least two drain contact regions together. A dielectric layer is formed over the semiconductor substrate and vertically separates the first and second conductive layers.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 21 is allowable over Watannabe for at least the following reasons. First, claim 21 calls for the semiconductor substrate to be a first conductivity type and for the drain regions to be a second conductivity type. As seen from Watannabe's FIG. 8, drain regions 15 and 19 are the same conductivity type as the Epi

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substrate (i.e., both are n-type). Also, claim 21 calls for a plurality of drain regions, wherein each drain region comprises a well region and drain contact. In Watannabe, only one well region 15 is shown. As stated in Col. 13, line 42, layer 23 is an "isolating diffusion layer."

Additionally, claims 21 calls for a first conductivity layer to couple together at least two source regions. Applicants respectfully submit that it is not clear what couples Watannabe's source regions 16 together. Specifically, it is not clear whether the source regions are tied together by a diffused region, by external wire bonds, or by metal layer 30, and with this uncertainty, applicants respectfully submit that Watannabe cannot anticipate this element of claim 21.

Further, claim 21 calls for a second conductive layer coupling at least two drain contact regions together. Applicants respectfully submit that it is not clear what couples Watannabe's drain contact regions together. Specifically, it is not clear whether the drain regions are tied together by a diffused region, by external wire bonds, or by a metal layer. The fact that Watannabe shows a metal layer 29 on one drain contact and a metal layer 28 on another drain contact would suggest that they are not tied together with a conductive layer. With this uncertainty, applicants respectfully submit that Watannabe cannot anticipate this additional element of claim 21.

Claims 22-24 depend from claim 21 and are believed allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 21.

Claim 26 depends from claim 21 and is believed allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 21. Additionally, claim 26 calls for one well region to have an edge at a surface of the semiconductor substrate, and wherein a portion of the second conductive layer is formed to extend over the edge. As shown in Watannabe's FIG. 8, conductive layer 28 clearly does not extend over either edge of well 15. Thus, applicants respectfully

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submit that claim 26 is allowable for this additional reason.

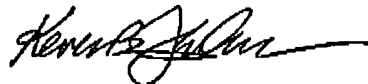
Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over Watannabe in view of Ludikhuize. This rejection is respectfully traversed in view of the amendments made herein and the remarks presented hereinafter.

Claim 25 depends from claim 21 and is believed allowable for the same reasons as claim 21 because neither reference shows or suggests the elements of claim 21. Additionally, claim 25 calls for at least one drain contact region to comprise an elongated stripe shape having rounded tips at opposing ends. Neither Watannabe nor Ludikhuize show or suggest an elongated stripe shape having rounded tips at opposing ends. Specifically, Watannabe does not show or suggest an elongated stripe at all, and although Ludikhuize shows an elongated stripe shape, his shape has flat ends, not rounded. Moreover, Ludikhuize does not suggest ends that are rounded. For these reasons, applicants respectfully submit that claim 25 is allowable over Watannabe and Ludikhuize.

In view of all the above, it is believed that the balance of the claims are allowable, and the case is in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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